

been consecrated in the ark—the covenant with Noah? Can men rationally then banish form and colour from ecclesiastical decoration? deny themselves walls and roofs, worship under the canopy of heaven—there will be the blue expanse, the bright sun, green trees, sparkling flowers, and incense-laden winds—are these sinful? There would be no need of church-building were the climate constant; but the bright day may be overcast—the healthful storm must sweep the infection-charged gullies, and purge nature of its rank growth and excess; Protestant churches and chapels still have the leaden aspect of the storm-cloud of the Reformation upon them, but it is visibly breaking and gradually rolling in masses away—sunshine appears in golden patches—music awakens, and the bright hues sparkle in the iris.

There are very many who would go the length of admitting ornamental decoration in places of worship, but who would still object to the introduction of the human figure in either painting or sculpture, dreading the imputation of idolatry. The worship and reliance on mere idols of wood and stone can alone appertain to the lowest condition of man; should such gross ignorance prevail in any class of society in Great Britain, the sin will be imputed to those who suffer such condition to exist when even moderate education would correct it. With the educated the image can never be more than typical—it is the embodiment of the idea formed in the artist's mind by the study of Holy Writ, which he projects out of himself, that his thoughts may become objective to others. Every body has pictures on the tablet of the mind, unseen by others; the artist is able to copy his, that his thoughts may be seen. Every Christian has graven images in his mind of the Saviour—his crucifixion—his burial—of the Apostles, and various descriptive passages of the sacred writings; the unseen Saviour to whom he bows is thus typically worshipped under the form of the image existing in his mind, designed and imprinted there by revelation. Had he the power of the artist again to reflect it out of himself we cannot see what harm there would be in worshipping in presence of the copy;—he must in presence of the original in his mind. If mankind have these painted tablets within them it may be said that they require no others; but the susceptibility of the artist's mind to receive a more vivid and correct impression than other men enables him to present mankind with a higher and more beautiful type—to replace the imperfect presentments of ordinary minds; it is, perhaps, the rude undefined image existing in the ordinary mind that deludes it into believing it worships none—its own is so faint when compared with the reality of the artist's that the artist's completely effaces it—its own is forgotten. If men reflect calmly and dispassionately, they would find that the difference between the image of St. Paul in their own minds and that presented to them by Raffaele is really the perfection of his compared with their own.

The embodiment, then, of the sacred personages or presentments of the historical portions of holy-writ by a talented artist presents the community of Christians with a higher interpretation, a higher realisation of Scripture than its own, and has the advantage as an adjunct of language of impressing its precepts and descriptions more forcibly on the mind by phrenotyping it in connection with form and colour. If what has been said be true, the introduction of the human figure, deified in painting or sculpture, cannot be rationally objected to; revelation informs us that man was made in the likeness of his Creator.

The masses would acquire elevated tastes by the prevalence of ecclesiastical decoration, and the feelings imbibed on the Sunday would ultimately suffuse the productions of industry, for men are inseparably moulded by the outward circumstances which surround them. While morally elevating the people, give them increased prosperity, and, to our productions in foreign markets, besides the superiority of fabric, superiority in design, and the inhabitants of Great Britain would then present to the foreigner the aspect of a higher and happier people.

W. CAVE THOMAS.

#### THE GAS MOVEMENT, IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

HAS fairly broke away from the leading strings and the fostering care of *THE BUILDER*, beyond whose limits in space it has at same time so rapidly risen, that all further attempts to compress its substance within the skirts and outskirts of the few short articles in which alone we could afford to clothe its hale and hearty limbs and members, now, were vain. We are but too well pleased, however, to see our broader sheeted contemporaries of the newspaper-press so willing, and anxious to adopt its cause, and we most warmly congratulate both them and it, as well as ourselves, on the promising result, although we do not mean to desert the ranks of its future defenders, in which, on the contrary, we are ready at once to enrol ourselves even as humble 'privates' amongst the great guns in newspaper warfare.

The excitement in the city on the subject of a supply of cheap and good gas has become so intense, that those who wrongly imagine they have cause to dread its issue, stigmatize it with the name of "mania;" and so extreme, on the other hand, is that most groundless dread itself, that it is characterised, by the very same parties, as a "panic," the reality of which, in the meantime, however groundless its cause, is but too clearly evidenced by "the continued fall in the value of their shares at the Stock Exchange," a fall which was lately acknowledged to have depreciated the metropolitan stock in gas alone 20 per cent., or to the extent of half a million of money, but for which we have not the least hesitation in saying, the holders have themselves and their senseless 'panic' alone to blame. And these same panic-stricken stages, not satisfied with dashing their own brains out, if they have any, have of late rushed into the provinces in print, by pamphlet and circular, to spread the infection amongst their own particular flock throughout the length and breadth of the land, beseeching all and sundry gas companies, shareholders, and officials, to bestir themselves in the cause, to rouse heaven and earth, or at least the House of Commons and its shareholding constituents, to destroy that 'great central' bugbear, "the Great Central Gas Consumer's Company," by smothering its Bill in the birth, else "the principle, when once established, must necessarily extend itself throughout the kingdom," and the light, they might have added, necessarily shine, in consequence, throughout every humble dwelling.

Now, that all this pitiful panic possesses no other essentiality than that of irrational and groundless absurdity, common to it with all panics, it would be very easy to show, were it at all worth our while, whose interests are identified with the extension and the triumph of a totally different cause,—the cause of the million. Yet having really also at heart the cause of the administrators, themselves, of this—poor man's light and heat, for kitchen and for parlour,—as we may well and truly say that gas is, or ought to be,—we shall just recall for an instant one case nearly in point, viz., that of the enforcement of reductions in price at Liverpool; and this we shall do most briefly and concisely by a short quotation from what we have already said on that subject. The metropolitan companies are now on the eve of being forced to swallow the very pill that has already done so much good to those who kicked and sprawled as lustily at Liverpool as our metropolitan friends are now engaged in doing here. "In that case, if our readers recollect, the company, after being literally pulled down from 45s. to 15s., 12s. 6d., 8s., and 7s., declared that it was utterly impossible to make gas at a lower price,—then to 5s., when there was another dead stop, as it was declared to be a losing price,—then down to something less than a losing price, viz., 4s. 6d. which their own 'chief clerk' at length, in evidence, declared to be a very good reason why they should—raise it again? by no means, but—reduce it even to 3s. 6d.! And, in truth, the ruinous, losing, and impossible prices actually realised the highest dividends allowed by their Acts, viz., 10 per cent., which were shortly afterwards announced! and that, too, in the face of a constant rise in the price of coal!" And now we may add, the expiry of another year, and even in the midst of a general depression in trade, has only confirmed the flou-

ishing state of things brought about by the exercise of a little gentle compulsion on the part of the Liverpool gas consumers, in the administration of a pill—offensive, it may have been, as assafoetida, in prospect and administration, yet assuredly, wholesome as household bread in operation and effect.

But have we not proved, in short, to satiety, from their own returns to Parliament, that reductions in price, to an indefinite extent, have ever been attended with an equivalent increase in profit as in consumption, and that there is not the slightest reason to think that the minimum of price, or any thing like it, has ever, as yet, been anywhere reached? At Liverpool itself, the price of coal has been much about the same with what it doubtless has cost the metropolitan companies. Indeed, at one of the late city meetings, as reported by a contemporary, it was declared by Mr. Pontifex, that "one ton of coals, which he could get for 12s. (a less price by several shillings than that at Liverpool when 4s. 6d. became the highly profitable charge for gas there per 1,000 cubic feet), would produce from 9,000 to 10,000 cubic feet of gas, consequently his gas cost but 1s. 2d. per 1,000 feet, the coke and residuum paying the cost of manufacture. If proper economy were used, 1s. 6d. per 1,000 feet would afford sufficient profit when the supply was large. He was supplying the Great Western Railway Company at Swindon at 1s. 5d. per 1,000, and certainly did not lose by it." Besides, even from the statement of Mr. Lowe, engineer to the Metropolitan "Chartered Gas Company," not only is the residual matter "of so much more value in London than in Liverpool, that gas can be manufactured 5d. per 1,000 cheaper in the former place from that source alone, as the larger the quantity of gas made the cheaper the production;" but moreover, "when the quality of the Liverpool gas is tested by the quality of that burnt in other large towns and the price paid for the two, the former being 4s. 6d. per 1,000 cubic feet, and the latter 7s. per 1,000 cubic feet (as it then was in the metropolis itself)—the reference being had to quality alone,—the other—the Liverpool gas—would be relatively worth 14s. per 1,000 cubic feet." What are we to think of the present restive resistance and protestations of the metropolitan companies then, by comparison with past experience at Liverpool? The former are not only engaged in a repetition of the groundless panic and outcry of the latter as to "losing prices," "ruinous losses," &c. &c., but they are losing all the little remnant of discretion which their past, though perfectly cognizant silence, under the infliction of our own hard knocks with stubborn facts, appeared to indicate. Desperation and the 'panic' aforesaid have at length betrayed them into publication, or into a permission of publication, in their defence, and by their own dependants, of some very formidable-looking and would-be-proof-positively-statistical, but only too clearly demolishable, pamphleteering and other statements, such as those to which we have before given all the notice that they merited; and we only now recur to them to prove, by a single instance, and by internal evidence of their own showing, and altogether apart from that overwhelming evidence which we have already adduced from time to time in *THE BUILDER*,—how truly preposterous and suicidal are their endeavours to bolster up a bad cause, and to occupy a false and untenable position. The instance in question occurs in a recent pamphlet, in the form of a Letter to Lord Carlisle, by a Civil Engineer; and is repeated essentially, though in a more curt and manageable form, in a letter signed Thomas G. Barlow, addressed, together with the pamphlet in question, to the editor of the *Morning Advertiser*,—an able defender of the good cause. In that letter, the statistical details of the pamphleteer are thus essentially put:—One ton of coals, at 17s., yields 9,250 cubic feet of gas, which give 2l. 0s. 10d. at an average price of 4s. 5d. (arising from the iniquitous and unjustifiable overcharge of 2s. 2d. beyond what the city street lamps are lighted at, namely, 2s. 10d., or 2d. less than the sum which the citizens in general are willing to give for their own supply). To this 2l. 0s. 10d., add for coke, tar, breeze, &c., 8s. 10d., and the whole proceed of the ton of coals is 2l. 9s. 6d. Now, over and above the exagge-